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ABSTRACT

The long-held belief that a person became an adult at about 20 years of age and, henceforth, remained psychologically and physically on a plateau until old age, has recently been found unacceptable in the light of research contributed by developmental psychology. Adult development may be viewed as the function of the interaction of the psychological, sociological, and the physical. One important psychological component is an individual's perspective or philosophical view. The philosophical viewpoint undergoes some alteration during the passage through adult life. These modifications may be a result of reflections and/or other forces that give impetus to realignment of metaphysical views. Various researchers have examined the values of groups of people from adolescence through old age and have found some significant changes. According to some researchers, younger persons generally appear to value love and self-absorption, while those who are middle-aged strive for productivity and care of others. The aged tend to hold values that are less material as they face a disengagement from life; however, few adults ever actually attain a state of total disengagement. Further research needs to be done using computer simulation to test this model against the changes of adult perspective through the lifespan. (KC)

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Philosophical Perspective as a Dimension of the Psychological Modality in the Theory of Adult Development

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There is no yardstick generally agreed upon in academia as to a theory of adult development. The ages of man were delineated by the ancient Greeks as infancy, childhood, young manhood, adulthood, and old age, etc. And then Shakespeare . . . ". infant . . school-boy . . lover . . soldier . . justice . . . . . The sixth age shifts

> Into the lean and slipper'd pantaloon,
> With spectacles on nose and pouch on side,
> His youthful hose, well saved, a world too wide
> For his shrunk shank, and his big manly voice
> Turning again toward childish treble, pipes
> And whistles in his sound. Last scene of all,
> That ends this strange eventful history
> Is second childishness and mere oblivion,
> Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans every thing."

Until recently little more was done to add to or subtract from these ideas. In the past decade or so, Neugarten, Havighurst, Gould, Levinson, Guttman, Maas, White, et al., have given attention to examining what takes place in adult life. They have isolated some facets of adult life that seem to be the common experience of all, i.e., transitional stages or phases around 30 or so, mid life stages 45-55, and later transitions at or around 65. Some have related these to crises said to be normative (Mussen, 1979). Others have equated crises as an individual dialectic (Riegel, 1976) interacting with stability as mutually dependent agents making development possible.

The long held belief that a person became an adult at twenty or twenty-two and henceforth remained psychologically and physically more or less on a plateau until old age, has recently been found unacceptable in the light of research

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contributed by developmental psychology. Evidence of change over the past four decades in character and disposition, direction of life, accrual of new abilities and propensities--all herald a variant viewpoint in terms of human adult development theory.

My theory of adult development comprises three modalities (cf. appendix) under the assumption that adult development is the function of the interacting of the psychological, sociological, and the physical. Each of these modalities has three or four basic components. The psychological has four components represented as identity (concepts, life styles), role dimension (homemaker, leader), illusions (psychodynamic aspects), and perspective (one's philosophical view). It is with the latter component that this paper is concerned. It may be argued that the components are not all-inclusive or discrete. A jury of some 30 or more interdisciplinary faculty and deans has examined the model and none has suggested either that the philosophical component didn't fit or major changes in the model. Dr. Ewald Busse, Dean of Duke Medical School, suggested we view the psychological as an interaction between the social (environment) and the physical. Even he and others taking this view realized the need to treat the psychological as an entity for research purposes. The model assumes that these components are variantly relevant at each of the major periods of adult life.

The purpose of this paper is to trace the basic philosophical (perspective) aspects through the adult life span isolating possible changes in ontological, epistemological, and axiological views. The position is taken that the philosophical viewpoint undergoes some alteration during the passage through adult life. These modifications may be due to reflections and/or other forces which give impetus to realignment of metaphysical views, i.e., the impact of illusions

(psychological modality), historical and social times (sociological modality) or stress adaptation (physiological modality). It may be that we can find few instances where metaphysical views have changed, although there seem to be some examples of shifts in philosophical persuasion in early adult life, i.e., John Dewey from idealism to pragmatism, James from realism to pragmatism, or Kierkegaard from idealism to existentialism. But who among the philosophers represents having made basic changes at fifty? Perhaps in axiology we will find more fertile ground through which to explore the life span changes. Charles Morris (1956) has attempted to isolate several determinants of value--the biological (through the use of body types), psychological (by use of Allport-Vernon Values Test) and the sociological (by using cultural differences). Even though this relates to the theory under discussion, there are no age differentials to help us with our indicated task excepting in the biological. Since other data came from an undergraduate population, the subjects are assumed to represent young adults rather than older adults in the sociological and psychological study.

An examination by Morris in his classic study (Varieties of Human Values) of ten differing views or conceptions of the "good life" called "ways to live" by various age groups, found interesting variations. These variations were statistically significant between the young adults 20-35 and those 36 and over. Twenty-five of this group were over 51. The number involved in this latter group was 115 and in the former approximately 2000. The middlescent respondents had a greater preference for a life style that emphasized Way VII--characterized by integrating action, enjoyment, and contemplation. The second choice of the respondents was Way I, which was characterized by preserving the best that man has attained. Way VII was also the principal choice of the younger adult and,

according to the investigator, this Way "seems almost independent of age." However, the young adults gave high rating to Ways VI and VIII which were epitomized by "constantly mastering changing conditions" in the first instance and in the second "live with wholesome, carefree enjoyment." When these choices were subjected to factor analysis, Factor B (enjoyment and progress through action) was clearly weaker than in younger adults. On the other hand, Factor D (receptivity and sympathetic concern) and Factor C (withdrawal and self-sufficiency) were both strong in the middle-aged adult. Factor A (social restraint and self-control) was also higher in the older adult. Morris says his results "suggest that after thirty-five, for many men and women there is a marked decline in the appeal of activistic and energetic conceptions of the good life and some increase in the appeal of the more conservative, receptive, meditative, and socially responsible conceptions."

The Morris study investigated the relationship of the psychological, social and physical determinants of value. These are the precise modalities of the human development model under review here. It was in this relation that Morris suggested "variations in value patterns with age are not simply biological in nature, as changes in the forms and levels of available energy will always exert an influence, but so will the physical and social environment in which these energies operate." It should be reiterated that one of the components at each age of the model is change, which creates a vector with other components and modalities. Change, it appears, takes the nature as aging proceeds through the culture (social modality) of forcing the mores and customs in stereotypic form on each person. (Act your age is a cliché that posits this idea.) A twenty-year-old son said to his fifty-year-old father, "Don't put coloring on your hair; leave

it gray." This is the expression of role expectation for his father and one that is commonized generally in society relating to age grouping. Between Factor B (enjoyment and progress through action) and the physical type, Sheldon's mesomorphy, there is a positive relation. Some support for this view comes from the correlation of somatotype component variables with the Thurstone's Temperament Schedule. On the variable "vigorous" involving 92 persons, mesomorphy had a positive correlation of .52 or 14% better than chance when inserted into the formula for predicting correlation efficiency* (Morris, 1956). It is the human organism that becomes a self through participation in social interaction, the self obviously influenced by its organic substructure and by the society in which it develops. The only relevant and disputed question is the extent of this organic or physical influence. It may be postulated that certain physiques are incompatible with certain social roles. Ectomorphs are not noted long-distance swimmers; nor are persons with very small hands likely to be concert pianists; nor do endomorphs figure prominently in the ballet. However, this is not conclusive nor can it be generalized in a limited way. Few psychologists and fewer sociologists believe the somatotype differences play any measurable role at the more complex levels of self and society. This is so, even though Lehman (1953) found a positive correlation between heights and college presidents. In addition, a positive though small correlation has been found between height and intelligence; this correlation, however, is little better than chance. When one looks at body size, i.e., as the product of height and weight, a closer relationship exists to somatotype. Ectomorphic persons tend to have smaller bodies and endomorphic persons tend to have larger body sizes. Comparing body sizes in this sense with

*$(E = 1 - \sqrt{1-R^2})$

"conceptions of the good life" the larger the body approved life styles characterized as "cultivate independence of persons and things" and "integrate action, enjoyment and contemplation" to a lesser degree than those with smaller physiques. Still overall, Way VII (integrate action, etc.) was chosen more by all types than any other Way. There is a consideration that is clear-cut regarding weight size and that being that mean weight for both men and women is above recommended averages from the mid-twenties to the mid-sixties suggesting a psychological influence of valuing as effected by the general societal view that fat is extremely undesirable.

Identity, one of four components in the psychological modality, interacts with the philosophical perspective and the developmental tasks as part of the sociological (environmental) modality. Erikson (1963) argued that certain changes are reflected in the years covering young adulthood to later adulthood. He refers to these as psychosocial crises that fluctuate between a continuum of ranges as follows: (1) young adulthood--intimacy and solidarity versus isolation; (2) middle adulthood--generativity versus self-absorption; and finally (3) later adulthood--integrity versus despair. The instrumental values for these are in the young adult "to love and find oneself in another"; in the middle-aged adult "to make, be and to take care of"; and finally in the older adult "to be, through having been, to face not being." These according to Erikson eventuate to terminal-like values (favorable outcomes) at the varying plateaus in life in the following manner: for the young adult, affiliation and love; for the middlescent, production and care; and for the older person, renunciation and wisdom. There is evidence from gerontological studies to suggest (Palmore and Maddox, 1977) that many older persons do not wish to renounce life, although Havighurst (1972)

suggests this is a universal task of older adults. Guttman (1964) stated the belief that the role of men and women alters considerably in the middlescent years with women becoming more aggressive and involving themselves in leadership roles and men becoming more passive and given to nurturance. (The metamorphosis of Rosalyn Carter or Eleanor Roosevelt are perhaps cases in point.) Physical changes that are relevant are involved in that the endocrine glands produce less estrogen for women and less androgen for men so that on reaching sixty most adults are neutral in gender from the steroid standpoint (Vedder, 1965). It is suggestive that these alterations contribute somewhat to role shifts. Whatever the essential nature of the influence of a given vector, it is recognized that various shifts of a specific character take place as we age, even though at the same time we acknowledge a pervasive general social value system (Pyff and Baltes, 1976).

In a study by Rokeach (1973) dealing with age differences in values, he found a continuous value change from early adolescence through old age. This study examined the variations in cross sectional life span instrumental and terminal values as they were ranked by adolescents (ages 11, 13, 15, 17), college students and adults in every decade, averaging a sample of over 200 for each from the 20's to the 70's. The check list which was utilized for rankings by the respondents involved 18 instrumental values such as ambitious, honest, loving, capable, independent, self-controlled, logical, etc., and 18 terminal values such as a world at peace, salvation, self-respect, family security, wisdom, freedom, a sense of accomplishment, etc. These 36 values were organized around fourteen developmental patterns for analysis. I will deal with only a selected few of the patterns here, the first being what Rokeach called Developmental Pattern 2:

Imaginative, Intellectual, Logical, Inner Harmony. These values are ranked low by the adolescent, they become moderately important during the college years, and then drop quickly again to a position of relatively low priority. The results of logical are of special relevance to social-psychological theories concerned with cognitive consistency. Logical is ranked sixteenth to eighteenth on the list by adolescents, it rises to twelfth among college students, and then drops to near the bottom by adult Americans. College professors, who typically place a high value on being logical (ranking it anywhere from fifth to eighth), seem in their formulation of consistency and balance theories to have projected their own values for being logical onto others, perhaps feeling others share this view.

Of all the 36 values, loving shows the most clear-cut linear relation to age. It begins as second in importance among eleven-year-olds and then declines to fourteenth for people beyond seventy. Developmental Pattern 12, Salvation, is evidently one of low priority for the adolescent as it ranks near the bottom of the terminal value hierarchy. It increases somewhat, occupying fourteenth position during the college years and continues to become more important, ranking third for those beyond seventy. There was reported an inexplicable drop for those in the sixties. Two values--salvation and forgiving--stand out above all others as the most distinctively Christian values according to Rokeach, whereas he says Jews and nonbelievers ranked salvation last. Of all, Developmental Pattern 14 (Freedom, Happiness, Social Recognition, Courageous, Honest, Self Control) shows little fluctuation with age. Honest is the most stable of all the 36 values, its composite ranking being first for all age groups without exception. The next most stable value is freedom which ranked among the first four values for all age groups. It would seem based upon this data, that generational differences in

value are a function of maturation and to some extent certainly are a function of changes in generational norms concerning socialization. It may be impossible to assess their relative contribution without longitudinal data, but it is perhaps safe to assume that a vector representing socialization norms, age decades or generational categories, and the physiological circumstances are part of the amalgam of the value pattern. It should be noted that in the research cited, 30 of the 36 values were statistically significant for age.

In a study by Pyff and Baltes (1976) utilizing the Rokeach Value Survey in a modified form, an examination was made of the value transition in women testing the Instrumentality-Terminality Sequence Hypothesis. Women (in middlescence average 43.1 and older women average age 70.4) were asked to rank the 18 instrumental and terminal values of the Rokeach scale both from the retrospective and prospective view. The results indicated that middle-aged women were more instrumentally oriented than were older women when they used retrospective judgment. The middle-aged women indicated they would be more terminally oriented in a prospective view of being an older person. The findings in this study, though cross-sectional in nature, are buttressed by the consistency in prospective, retrospective and concurrent assessments. The authors state transitional shifts in value are evident despite the existence of a strong and invariant general social system of values as indicated in the findings of no differences in social desirability and generally attested to by the literature. Socially accepted values which praise terminal value for middle-aged women by the surrounding cultural influence are rejected by the participants in this study in that they espoused external ambition and achievement in their middlescent years. Why not, they were only in their forties. Nonetheless, terminal values are ranked higher

in old age than are instrumental ones, which parallels in a broad sense the theory of "disengagement" as presented by Cummings (1961) and Birren (1963) and retrogression in physical strength--visual and sense acuities.

An examination of the stage theory of moral development by Kohlberg reveals that few adults ever achieve the final stage of development, to wit, universal-ethical-principle orientation as based upon abstract ethical principles as defined by logic. In fact, Kohlberg concluded that no person under the age of 23 displays true "stage 5 thought" (1973). In other research, Kohlberg found that none of the adults he examined for moral development who had not attended college and gone directly into an adult occupation developed postconventional morality. The moratorium afforded students in college obviously gives them time to explore values and to learn about themselves before facing the obligations of the work-a-day world. Mussen et al. (1979) suggest that a second personal experience important for movement to principled thought is "explicit cognitive-moral stimulation." He says the person must have not only the time and the supportive environment to consider moral principles but also the stimulus to do so. A college "moral discussion program" is apparently effective stimulation for many students according to Boyd (1973). His research found such experiences leading forty percent of the "conventional" participants to stage 5. Kohlberg suggests the student-moratorium experience is ineffective until later life, when the person experiences "sustained responsibility for the welfare of others and the experience of irreversible moral choice"--the kind of experiences one has when supervising people in an important job or when making important family decisions.

The expansion of caring as people reach middlescence has been enunciated by Alfred Adler (1927) through his talk of "increased social interest"; by Andras

Angyal (1941) who wrote of "homonomy"--a tendency he said was to increase harmony and joint action with individuals in a group. Maslow (1970) spoke of "love and belongingness" need, while Carl Rogers (1959) emphasized empathy and unconditional positive regard. The humanization of values seems to correlate with increased expansion of caring as most of the major personality theorists allege (White, 1975).

The inculcated values following the eastern philosophies, Hinduism, Taoism, etc., suggest that in our older years one should retreat from the active pursuit of trade and profession withdrawing from the race of life to contemplation. It follows that the aged, who are revered, in these eastern societies will be consulted for their wisdom which serves in a sense to verify the solidity of worth of the terminal values. Their concern is not with metaphysics--the nature of prime matter--or the logical or epistemological truth, but with feeling and with the fusion of themselves as one with the universe. Gandhi states that "one does not meet God as a person but in action." Gandhi's "Truth" according to Erikson (1969) was found when he faced the psychosocial middlescent crisis of "generativity versus self-absorption." This crisis eventuated into favorable outcomes of production and care--first for the mill workers on strike in 1918 at Ahmedabad and later in the march to the Arabian Sea in 1930 to collect some salt from the sea in defiance of the British government. These acts subsequently contributed to Indian freedom in 1947. Erikson asserts that values advance in terms of stages, becoming possibly transcendent over and fused with the values of earlier periods. He states:

> Morality and ethics thus must evolve in each person in a step-by-step development through ever more differentiated and insightful stages. Even as each earlier stage lives on in all later ones, each later stage

> can represent a reintegration of all earlier ones on a higher level. But this also implies a continuing and inexorable dynamic conflict between the earlier and most primitive, and the later, more mature values in each person.

In the schemata of the human development model, one component of the sociological is reaction. When applied to the philosophical dimension, this may result, due to environmental concomitants, in accommodation, surrender, or transcendence. Erikson (1975) has suggested transcendence in the quotation above found in his work Life History and the Historical Moment. A further quotation from the same work suggests accommodation as a mode which might apply to the philosophical components. He says:

> The adult pole of our ethical nature, then, is an affirmative, because more informed and experienced, sense of what one human being owes to another in terms of the developmental realization of the best in both--and in their dependents. But alas, our most ethical, most ideological, and most moralistic modes tend to make deals with each other--deals which eventually permit man to commit or, indeed, to passively agree to the enslavement or annihilation of other human "species" in the name of the highest values. And as to what we do to our own kind, consider the "crime of punishment" by which we righteously and legalistically incarcerate society's deviants and (suspects) and by which excarcerate dissenters, and both with no more logic than the thoughtless moralism with which we repress parts of ourselves within ourselves. It is this above all that insight must help us resolve sufficiently to counteract the special potentialities for evil in a worldwide technology. It is for us to increase the margin of ethical choice by gaining and giving insight into the blatant deals which not only virtue and vice but also the ethical, the ideological, and the moral are attempting to make within us and right in front of us.

The accommodation of values accompanies the historical times and the social milieu. They also reflect the physical circumstances in which we exist. Although we have dealt only partially with metaphysical aspects, we may have added to some assessment of the axiological context if only in broad ways, perhaps not unlike John Ciardi's words on the meaning of love: "Love is a word used to label the sexual excitement of the young, the habituation of the middle-aged, and the mutual

dependence of the old." We hang our lives on a variety of values when we are young, during the middle years the few values that remain are torn and strained and in old age we die at last with their residue.

This is only a small beginning. The search of the literature for narrative material and data needs to be done for every possible vector between the components in this model. It is hoped that the computer simulation undertaken will provide further delineation of the parameters involved in life-span philosophical perspectives.

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